DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 659 HE 031 815

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TITLE	When Women Ask the Questions: Creating Women's Studies in America.
ISBN	ISBN-0-8018-5834-8
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	360p.; Foreword by Catharine R. Stimpson.
AVAILABLE FROM	Johns Hopkins University Press, 2715 North Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218-4319; Web site: www.press.jhu.edu ($29.95).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	Curriculum; *Educational History; Educational Methods; Educational Philosophy; Educational Trends; *Feminism; Higher Education; Intellectual Disciplines; Political Influences; Scholarship; Theory Practice Relationship; Trend Analysis; *Womens Studies

ABSTRACT

This book reviews the history and effects of women's studies in American higher education and concludes that the rise of women's studies has challenged the university in the same way that feminism has challenged society at large. The history of the field is narrated within the context of the philosophical and political goals of its practitioners. Also discussed are the present status of women's studies in various types of institutions; the impact of a quarter century of feminist scholarship, teaching, and academic advocacy; and the field's increasingly international presence. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the book's main themes: feminist advocacy, scholarly inquiry, and the experience of women. Chapter 2 examines the field of knowledge called women's studies; Chapter 3 examines curriculum issues; chapter 4 the classroom; chapter 5 looks at diversity issues; and chapter 6 examines the theory, practice, and relationship of women's studies to other issues affecting the university. Chapter 7 addresses the purposes of feminist education and its role within the academic establishment, and chapter 8 responds to critics inside and outside the academy. The final chapter explores the place of women's studies in the evolution of American higher education and its impact on a changing institution. (Contains approximately 600 references.) (DB)

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